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# English Translations of Two German Plays With Introduction And Notes

Elva Ellen Bartel

*Fort Hays Kansas State College*

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ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF TWO GERMAN PLAYS

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Science

by

Elva Ellen Bartel, B. S.

Fort Hays Kansas State College

Date

July 25, 1947

Approved

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Major Professor

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To

Dr. Myrta E. McGinnis of Westminster College,  
New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, who directed the  
greater part of my graduate work, who inspired  
my interest in the field of English, and who  
suggested this very enjoyable thesis study.

gift

author

9.29.47

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## PREFACE

This book is intended for English-reading students who have an elementary knowledge of German, or who are studying courses in German literature. It is meant to supplement their own translations; or the plays may be read, even dramatized, by students or the general reading public for their own amusement. This present translation is to show, as far as may be possible, the German tone and conical situation which each author intended. It is not always that the idea of a foreign idiom may be translated into an idea or idiom of similar intent in the English language; however where this was not possible, the nearest English translation is used, with notes explaining the particular passages. There have been no changes whatever, except that German ejaculations which, when translated, give the suggestion of irreverence have been somewhat modified and annotated. Since the comedy of these two plays depends chiefly upon comedy of the situation instead of diction, (ss Introduction), this does in no way influence the effect of the play.

The Introduction has been written mainly with reference to the general purpose of the book and to furnish a background for the reader concerning references made to German life and habits within the scope of the plays. The special notes following the plays give explanations for various expressions used and also a few references of special interest.

My especial thanks are due to Mrs. Emma Golden of this college

for reading my translations and making valuable suggestions in connection with them, and to Dr. Ralph V. Coder, head professor in English, for assistance in reading and correcting the Introduction and the entire proof. I wish also to thank Dr. F. B. Streeter for suggestions as to the general form of the book.

E. E. B.

## INTRODUCTION

The two plays chosen for translation are representative of nineteenth century German society. The authors are noted writers of comedy. Wilhelmi is chiefly remembered as the author of Einer muss heiraten, while Benedix remains unequalled, except by Hans Sachs, for producing a wide range of dramatic literature. Even though Benedix does not attain the dramatic construction and the truth to life that Bauernfeld's <sup>1</sup> dramatic works show, his comedies still entertain the pleasure-seeking audiences of today.<sup>2</sup>

The chief merit of Benedix's plays is that they are thoroughly German and reveal the social conditions of his time. He wrote his comedies, as did Wilhelmi, during the years which followed the political revolutions of 1848-1849. During this time middle class society became conscious of its significance in public life, and the writers, in order to keep in touch with the reality of contemporary life, chose such forms of literature that would be able to represent life -- the novel and the drama.

The characters of both plays are familiar types of the upper middle class, revealing their foibles, their eccentricities, their homely virtues in such a way that one has merely to know something of human nature in any land in order to understand them. There is exaggeration even to the point of caricature, but the audience is merely amused, never deceived.

Benedix, as a dramatist, has no message, as did Bauernfeld and

others; his only purpose is to amuse, and thousands are grateful for the smiles he has provoked.<sup>3</sup> His play, Eigensinn, is typical of his shorter comedies. He builds upon a very simple theme a succession of human situations - - here the same situation is repeated with three different couples. His dialogue is always easy and natural, depending upon comical situations for his effect rather than wit. The plots are so slight and simple that we wonder at their success.

Because the two comedies were written for the entertainment of everyone, they can be produced in the school or at home as well as in the theater. That the authors had this in mind <sup>4</sup> is shown by the title Haustheater, Benedix's two-volume publication of one-act comedies. The scenery and stage effects, as well as the costumes, are simple, the humorous effects being furnished by comical situations.

Wilhelmi is chiefly remembered as the author of Einer muss heiraten (1850) which shows him at his best in the use of clever dialogue and droll situations. The personal relationship of Jakob and William Zorn is the author's allusion to the famous Brothers Grimm, typical German scholars.<sup>5</sup> This has also contributed much to the popularity of the little play, for the Germans like to make merry, in a harmless way, over the awkward, absent-minded university professor who, it is made to appear, has no other interest in life than the pursuit of knowledge, yet they are proud of him, and know well how much their country owes to him.

Both plays are written in the high German, the literary language of Germany. The form of language is so named for the section

of Germany from which it takes its name. The entire German territory may be divided into two large groups: the "high" German and the "low" German. High German is the language of middle and south Germany, of Austria, and of a great part of Switzerland. This language, especially since Luther's translation of the Bible, has become the leading written language. Low German is the language of the north German lowlands. It is closely related to the language of Holland and to the English.<sup>5</sup> Because the high German is used in literature and business, the low German continues to be erroneously looked upon as only a dialect. The line of demarcation between high German and low German is from Dusseldorf in the Rhineland eastward to the Polish border.<sup>2</sup> The two languages differ from each other and from all other dialects chiefly by the so-called shifting of consonants, which probably took place between A. D. 500 and 700.<sup>6</sup>

By this process original d changed to t; original t, initial and after consonants (or doubled) to z or tz (pronounced ts), after vowels to a sound similar to s, which much later became identical with s; original p, initial and after consonants (or doubled), to pf, after vowels to ff, f; original k, initial and after consonants (or doubled) in the extreme south only, to kch, later ch, after vowels to ch. A similar change, sometimes classified here, original th to d began much later, but spread over the entire High and Low German territory. In consequence of these changes High German differs in its consonants more widely from Modern English than do the low dialects. Examples:

<u>English</u>	<u>Low German</u>	<u>High German</u>
day	dag	tag
tide	tid	zeit
plant	plante	pflantze
water	water	wasser
pipe	pipe	pfeife
corn	korn	chorn, alemanian
make	maken	machen
that	dat	das

(See Germany, The Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 12, New York: American Corporation, 1941).

The historical development of Germany will not be treated here. More practical, perhaps, is the sociological division based upon the supporters of culture to the time just preceding the Hitler movement. From the thirteenth century there was associated with Germany a commerce between states, and from the nineteenth century grew an international industrial system - -peasant farmers, bourgeois or middle class, and the proletariat, each closely influencing the intellectual life of the country.

Social divisions were very fine and precise, and jealously observed in Germany. The reason is not the influence of wealth, as wealth had never become the standard of personal worth or social rank. A man had untold wealth, but if he had nothing more, he would knock in vain for entrance into good German society. The first rank was an aristocratic group of families consisting of large landowners, princes of industry,



high state officials, popular doctors, and artists. The upper middle class may be said to have included members of the landowners and commercial classes in medium circumstances, the majority of higher officials, and many members of professions. A third group, or lower middle class was made up of farmers, artisans, small tradespeople, officials, and the skilled work-people. The lower class comprises mainly wage-earners, humbler officials and artisans, and peasants.

The strongest and narrowest of all social groups is the military class. It would be impossible to exaggerate the feeling of superiority of the officer toward civilians in general.<sup>1</sup> Because of this social advantage, the young officer was the most desired of matches. A military marriage was the dream of every girl of social aspirations, but its possibilities of becoming a fact were very remote unless her rank was of the highest. For this reason it was very important, when addressing anyone in person or by letter to use the title that was most complimentary to his rank and in keeping with his social distinction.<sup>7</sup>

Just as Germany has always been a land of soldiers, it was also a land of schools; in fact, there was a close association between the school and the army. The state insisted upon controlling the entire system of education. And whereas children formerly entered military education upon the completion of the sixth year of elementary education, they began compulsory military training under the Hitler Youth Movement in 1932 at the age of six.

From the secondary school to the university was a step far more frequently and naturally taken than in many other countries. The stu-

dent, no matter how humble his origin, could continue through the university without fear of obstacle or failure, if he had staying power. The fees charged were almost nominal. There was, however, a less effective control over study than in many other countries. The schools were teaching institutions to which the student went as many times a day to hear lectures in his chosen fields as he desired. When he entered school he signed a lecture-register and paid the assigned fees, and at the close of the term received a signed certificate from the professor which is a testimony that he had attended. It was due to the looseness of student attendance at the intervening lectures that the absent-minded professor, alluded to in Einer muss heiraten, has his notoriety. He may have lectured for an entire term to a room of a score and a half of students, and then find himself called upon to sign a hundred certificates at the end of the course.<sup>8</sup>

As for the education of women, times changed since a famous German educationist long ago justified the higher education of women on the ground that "A German husband ought not to be bored by the intellectual short-sightedness and narrowness of the wife at his domestic hearth". From this discovery proceeded the woman's movement everywhere, as is voiced by Louise in Einer muss heiraten. That she has an individuality of her own to cultivate and realize instead of living in blind obedience to her husband's will, is echoed by all the women characters in Eigensinn. When German girls left the school it was with a breadth of culture that would astonish the average American. And when in course of time she took upon herself domestic



responsibilities, she kept up with current culture by devoting her spare moments to books. Her publications were not readily accepted, however, and therefore she usually chose a masculine pen name until her works were accepted. That German women are authors of accomplishment is shown by the fact that a well-known German illustrated magazine offered prizes for the best three stories to be submitted in competition, and when the award of prominent jurors was examined, it was found that all three went to women, though the total of works compared was a thousand.<sup>9</sup>

At least half the teachers of the municipal higher schools for girls in Berlin are women, and almost the same proportion holds true in the elementary schools.

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ONE SHALL MARRY!  
(Einer muss heiraten)

Comedy by  
Alexander Wilhelmi

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OBSTINACY  
(Eigensinn)

Comedy by  
Roderick Benedix

Translated With Notes

by  
Elva Ellen Bartel

1947

ONE SHALL MARRY!

Comedy in One Act

by

Alexander Wilhelmi

### Characters

Jacob Zorn<sup>1</sup>

Brothers, Both University Professors

William Zorn<sup>1</sup>

Gertrude, their aunt

Louise, her niece

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### Setting:

Summer-house in the garden of the Zorn brothers, in a university town.

(The scene represents a garden. To the right of the entrance to the house is an open pavilion or a spacious arbor. In the pavilion is a large table covered with books, globes, and physical instruments. At the other side, underneath a tree, is a rustic table and chairs. Shrubbery in the background of the pavilion.)

#### First Scene

Jacob and William (seated in comfortable easy-chairs in the pavilion, absorbed in reading. Lady Gertrude, after a short pause, steps out of the house).

Gertrude: Sure enough! Here they are sitting again like statues, buried in that confounded parchment.<sup>2</sup> Everything around them could go to destruction; they would not even notice it; and the severest earthquake would not be able to rouse them from their lethargy. - - Look here, you book-worms, you parchment moths; the breakfast hour is long past, and you just act as if you didn't even have a stomach.

William: (looking up from his book, quietly). You have told us that three times already.

Jacob: (likewise). Do not disturb us, dear aunt. There is no hurry. (Both resume their reading.)

Gertrude: (angry). Is that so? And do you believe that one has nothing more to do than to wait, until it suits you to take the little coffee which has to be warm continually? (To William). Since I have already repeated it three times, I believe it would be time to pay attention.

William: (to Jacob, without looking up). There is no doubt that Finns and the Letts<sup>3</sup> are of the same Aryan origin. From the undeniable linguistic kinship of Petcheneg with this tribe we can conclude—

Gertrude: (furiously). Confound the Finns and Calmucks, this is too much! It is just as though the like of us were not even on the earth!

Jacob: Your clamor, dear Aunt, is an indisputable proof of your existence.

William: And it is desirable that you do not interrupt our study with such trifles.

Gertrude: -- Trifles? That splendid breakfast! Coffee, rolls and butter, eggs and meat, trifles? Only such cuttle-fish as you could assert that. Tell me, what of your entire scholarly rubbish is more important?

Jacob: Dear Aunt, you do not understand that.

Gertrude: (provoked). I should like to see my self<sup>4</sup> concerned with such trash. Oh, I know right well, that you look down upon me with contempt for that reason; and yet I tell you that you are nothing, nothing at all, without me!

William: (impatiently). Indeed! We thoroughly esteem your merits, if only you would not make such a fuss about it.

Gertrude: Why, of all things.<sup>5</sup> Is that not enough to make an end of one's patience. Is it not a sin and shame that a couple of capable, strong young men, who are in the position to accomplish something worth while, should dry up behind their books like herring

hung in smoke!

William: What a prosaic comparison!

Gertrude: But true and to the point! If I would not arouse you occasionally, the dust would cover you an inch thick, as it does the parchment-bound volumes <sup>6</sup> in your library. And what, just what do you really know? Nothing. Nothing at all.

Jacob: True, only too true, Dear Aunt. Man's knowledge is piece-work.

Gertrude: Yes, such knowledge of fools, as you are. Other people, who are not buried in their books the whole, livelong day know something worthwhile. They know how to keep their house in order, how to manage their property, and how to live so they and others may enjoy it.

Jacob: If everyone had reasoned that way, then science would be in a worse condition than it really is. <sup>7</sup>

William: And for that reason the profane world can not esteem the scholars highly enough. Do they call it living to accumulate money, to eat and drink and sleep? Most of them do not even know that they are alive and why they are alive anyhow. Why, Aunt, do you really live? Tell me that.

Gertrude: (somewhat taken aback). What? I? Why I live? Now say, just look at that! I - - I live for my pleasure.

William: A fine reason! But that does not count, Aunt; a better one.

Gertrude: (angrily). Why I live? That has never occurred to me! No one has every told me that. I live so that such personified letters



as you can torment and provoke me; that you reward all my care and worry for your ingratitude; that you can wish nothing but death for your old aunt who provides for your table, your clothing, your bit of house-keeping. Oh, I probably have already lived too long for you. I am a burden to you.

William: But dearest Aunt, we were not speaking of that at all.

Jacob: (to William). That serves you right. Why do you allow yourself to get into an argument with women? They never stick to the point.

Gertrude: (furiously, to Jacob). Is that so? Then it is not even worth while that anyone speaks with us? Are we for nothing, entirely nothing upon this earth? But right, you are the oldest one and must, with your good teaching, destroy what bit of life William still retains. He still has feeling, still has a heart in his body; but you, you had better allow yourself to be bound in leather and placed among your wretched old books.

William: Do you see? It just serves you right. Why do you have to mix yourself into our quarrel?

Gertrude: (going back and forth). This cannot continue in this way any longer! Things must change. And it must be decided yet today. I will show you yet! (She approaches them resolutely). You must marry! A couple of capable women must enter this house. They will teach you to behave!

William, Jacob: (rising quickly, frightened) Aunt! <sup>8</sup>

Jacob: Of all things, aunt, do not come again with your old threats!

William: (softly). Come, Brother, let us fulfill her request and go to breakfast.

Gertrude: (aside). Aha! That brought results! <sup>9</sup> (Aloud) Yes, marry, I say; and this time I shall insist upon it. I have suggested plenty of matches which are all advantageous. You have only to choose.

Jacob: How often must we remind you that such a step must be well-considered and thought over?

Gertrude: How long do you want to consider? Look at yourself in the mirror and be glad if a young girl would have such a scarecrow.

William: We have a long time yet to consider marriage. Why and with what right do you urge us so?

Gertrude: Look here! Who is it that reared you? Who carried you in her arms and taught you to stand, to walk, and to speak? True, it is long enough since then to have forgotten. But I who have loved you as a mother, have not forgotten.

Jacob: Well then, if you still love us, then do not disturb us in our happiness which we find in the seclusion of our study and investigations.

Gertrude: I know best what is good for you. And in short, if you do not obey me and make up your minds at once, I will have nothing to do with you and will disinherit<sup>10</sup> you.

William: O Aunt, we do not seek after your property.

Jacob: Our wishes are modest and our needs small. We will

gladly forego money and possessions, only do not torment us any longer with that terrible idea of marriage.

Gertrude: Good, you may have that! But I shall also go and leave you to your fate. See for yourself how you get along.

Jacob, William: (alarmed). O, dearest Aunt, how can you think that way?

Gertrude: Yes, I shall leave your house, for I can no longer endure such doings as these. What will you do then? Despite your knowledge you are defeated persons, for in all your great volumes it can not be found how one cares for kitchen and cellar, for house and clothing. Then you will realize at last the true worth of a woman's hands, though they be only those of your old aunt.

Jacob, William: (irresolutely) Of all things, Aunt, do not frighten us so!

Gertrude: For shame! Aren't you ashamed of yourselves to refuse to do anything to please your old aunt? Even if I mean nothing to you, you should at least honor the request of your dying father. I have not studied, but I do know that it is one's sacred duty to fulfill the desires of one's parents.

William: (softly to Jacob). It is true, Jacob. That was his last request.

Jacob: (likewise). His last word! (To aunt, parleying). But Aunt, he only said: One of us shall marry.

William: (bolder). And you demand it of both of us. What would we ever do with two women? Then there would be no peace at all in this house.

Gertrude: Oh well, you do not understand that! The more women, the better. And if only one of you takes the lead, the other will follow on his own accord. But one of you must do it now.

Jacob: (scratches his ear, to William). So then, one of us must marry.

William: (likewise). There probably is no other way.

Jacob: Well, William, what do you think? You are still young; you can venture it the more easily.

William: (startled). Heaven forbid. You are the eldest; it is much more appropriate for you.

Jacob: It is easier for you. You have more pleasant ways and you are really quite handsome.

William: You are much more sedate than I, more manly. You would make a far better husband than I. And then too, the eldest must always leave the home first.

Jacob: That is only true for girls. See, dear brother, I, I can not do it. Impossible!

William: (doubtfully). Nor I. I am not able.

Gertrude: (interrupts impatiently). Confound this endless dilly-dallying! Here we seem to be at the starting-point. Don't stand there as if you had been sent to the scaffold. You cowards,<sup>11</sup> take heart; it is not a life and death matter.<sup>12</sup>

Jacob: William always has more courage than I.

William: Jacob should have been a good example for me and gone ahead long ago; but he withdrew from all the girls whom you have suggest-

ed to him. Now he can choose from one of these.

Jacob: Well, by this time all of those most certainly are either dead or married. (To Aunt). I am convinced, that at the present you yourself know of no one.<sup>13</sup>

Gertrude: What? Ten instead of one! And there is a splendid girl right among us who is much too good for you. But, of course, such crabs<sup>14</sup> as you would observe nothing, even if you stumbled over it. Have you no eyes, no appreciation for the beautiful?

William: What do you mean?

Gertrude: Then has it not occurred to you at all why I took my dead brothers' daughter into this house?

Jacob: How, Aunt, Louise? Your niece? Our relative?

Gertrude: Such a distant relationship as that does not mean anything. She is not wealthy, but she is beautiful, and what is more important; she is good and worthy. Thus, no hesitation,<sup>15</sup> but a quick decision, for not everything that tarries becomes good. Therefore, make short work of it. One of you must marry. Think it over now; and when I return, I must know which one of you is the bridegroom. Adieu! (Leaves stage, enters house).

## Second Scene

Same as before, but without Gertrude. (Both walk back and forth indignantly, with their hands behind them).

Jacob: (after a pause). Confounded moment!

William: Cursed business!



Jacob: (continues walking about) This has completely upset me! What would it be with a woman in the house?

William: Terrible! Fearful! But still there is no way out. What does our cousin look like?

Jacob: I have never noticed her.

William: Nor I. Aunt will not let this rest; I know how she is. I am sure she is in earnest with her threats to leave us.

Jacob: What shall we do then? We are so accustomed to our old routine.

William: To be sure. So you had better make your decision.

Jacob: (startled). I? Why certainly not! (Approaches William, takes his hand, tenderly). William, be sensible! You are a promising young man. Be so kind, <sup>16</sup> and get married!

William: (likewise). My dear brother, anything, anything you wish; only not that!

Jacob: But see, I know that you have been successful with the ladies before. You have more experience, and you have been in love, too. That has never happened to me; I would appear as out of place as a dancing bear.

William: Why that doesn't look so bad. I once saw such an animal - -

Jacob: You have more talent for marriage; you will certainly be very happy. Wedlock, family life, are said to be so wonderful. I can just see you, with a charming and good wife at your side, surrounded with blooming, happy children. How they hug and kiss you, and rock

themselves on your knees, and how you all love one another dearly. O, believe me, such happiness is to be envied.

William: All right, dear Brother, procure it for yourself. Just help yourself.

Jacob: Oh, we're not even talking about myself. Unfortunately, I do not have the talent for marriage as you have. But I shall be most happy at your good fortune! I shall rear your children, love them, as though they were my own. Everything, everything will I do for you! And just thing, too, what a beautiful girl Louise is!

William: But you haven't even looked at her.

Jacob: Well, it seemed that way to me, anyway. And Aunt says so, too. And she is so worthy and good! She would become a most lovable little wife.

William: Yes, Aunt says so, too. So then, good luck to you, dear brother!

Jacob: (goes impatiently back and forth) Of all things! All my efforts have been in vain. I have taken all imaginable pains, to picture for him the happiness of marriage in the most charming colors, and still he remains cold as a stone! For goodness sake, tell me, why do you not wish to marry?

William: Well then, why do you not wish to?

Jacob: Don't you realize that I can not do that?

William: Then you see, I can not do it either.

Jacob: Then you do not want to? Irrevocably?

William: (coldly) I can not.

Jacob: Now I know what I am to think of your love.

William: If you love me, you will get married yourself. But in order to show you that I am not so hard-hearted as you, I shall make you a proposition.

Jacob: Well?

William: (as though he had come to a conclusion). We will draw!

Jacob: Draw? Brother, that is frivolous.

William: That's my idea, too,<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it would be better for you to marry forthwith.

Jacob: The lot could fall on me.

William: Certainly; but unfortunately, me, too.

Jacob: What shall I do then?

William: Marry.

Jacob: I'll not draw. Never will I place myself in such danger.

William: Just as you wish. They you must marry, for certain I will not do it!

Jacob: (pleads once more). Brother! - -

William: (quickly interrupting, angrily). Now leave me alone! One of us must do it, both of us do not want to. Therefore, the lot must decide who shall be the unlucky one. This is my last word. This is all that I can do for you.

Jacob: Well then,<sup>18</sup> if there can be absolutely no other way. But how shall we do it?



William: That is soon done. (Goes to the table). We will take two balls, a black one and a white one.

Jacob: (anxiously, speaking mechanically). One black and one white.

William: (who hunts about). There are none to be found.<sup>19</sup>

Jacob: (happily). Thank heaven!

William: Better yet, we'll take two slips of paper.

Jacob: Two slips of paper.

William: (cutting and preparing the slips of paper). There -- the one I mark with a cross, the other remains white.

Jacob: With a cross.

William: The one with the cross obligates himself for marriage. (He rolls it up).

Jacob: That is very significant.

William: The white one goes free. (Rolls it likewise).

Jacob: O, if I should get that one.

William: Yes, I believe that anyone could wish that.<sup>20</sup>

Jacob: Well, what happens now?

William: (searching). Now we need an urn.<sup>21</sup> For the lack of one I shall take your little skull cap. (Reaches toward Jacob's head).

Jacob: (anxiously). No, Brother, rather take yours; I am unlucky!

William: As far as I am concerned. (He takes his own, either from his head or from the table, places the rolls inside and shakes it). There, now this affair will be shaken up properly.

Jacob: (Anxiously). But honorably, William, honorably.

William: That's understood! Everthing according to right and conscience. There, now draw.

Jacob: (alarmed). No, I - - I have not the courage. You draw.

William: O, don't make such a fuss. Quick, draw.

Jacob: I truly can not, Brother. I have had luck; I would certainly draw the fateful cross the very first try. Do me a favor and draw first.

William: Well, and that too! (At the same time he puts his hand into the cap, shakes it again, and offers it to Jacob; dryly). Here, take!

Jacob: (anxiously steps nearer, reaches with trembling hand into the cap, with a sigh). There.

William: (throws the little cap upon the table). Now we each have our part. (He holds up his slip of paper).

Jacob: (likewise) Yes, but my whole body trembl s.

William: Just open it quickly!

Jacob: I am not able. Open yours first.

William: (angery). Oh, why must I do everything first? Not that! We open them at the same time, while I count to three. (As he counts he goes slowly to the side of the table, Jacob to the side of the tree).  
So then: One!

William: (still walking) Two!

Jacob: (likewise, trembling) Two!

William: Three! (He opens the roll).

Jacob: (has opened the roll and has seen the cross). Oh, death.<sup>22</sup>

William (leaps about joyously) Hurrah! Hurrah!

Jacob (has sunk upon a garden-chair) Oh, I am an unlucky soul!

William: (Still happy). Glorious! Splendid! I am footloose and free; unattached and single.<sup>23</sup> I could embrace the whole world! Hurrah! Hurrah! (He skips about.)

### Third Scene

Same as before. Gertrude (steps out of the house).

Gertrude: (astonished). What noise and rejoicing is this? William, are you having a fit?

William: (embraces her and dances about with her). A kiss, Aunt, a kiss! I am the luckiest person under the sun!

Gertrude: Will you let me go, you rascal. I haven't seen you like this for ten years, - - what has happened, anyway? (notices Jacob.) And what is the matter with Jacob? The one leaps and dances, the other lies there as though he had had a stroke.

William: (points tragi-comically to Jacob) No, Aunt, he has only taken hold of himself and prepared to make a decision. That has affected him so.

Gertrude: (happily) What? Jacob?

William: Yes, Aunt. He wants to get married.

Gertrude: (has approached Jacob, and taps him on the shoulder). Oh, bravo! well done! At last you are talking sensibly.<sup>24</sup>

Jacob: (recovers himself, stands up). Poor, ruined soul that I am! I surmised it right from the first. I know my misfortune; that could happen only to me! Of all things! I -- and to marry!

Gertrude: (rubs her hands contentedly). So Jacob is the lucky one! That makes me doubly happy! You see, William, I well knew that he is the most sensible one. Let this be an example to you.

William: You are right, Aunt. Jacob is a goodhearted person. We have considered this thing carefully, and of his own free will he offered to fulfill your wish.

Jacob: (in the meantime has stepped quietly to the other side to William). But I won't do it. This thing was not done as it should have been. You had the advantage; you drew first.

William: (angrily) You didn't want to! Now don't start something new.

Jacob: Aunt shall decide.

William: (quietly, urgently) You certainly won't tell her after all that we drew lots? That would be the height of folly.

Jacob: Indeed?

William: Certainly, you would be ridiculed forever. Be reasonable and give yourself to your fate with composure.

Gertrude: Well, now what are you up to?

William: Oh nothing, nothing at all. Jacob is only in a dilemma because of the marriage arrangements -- the outfitting, the household arrangements, and so on.

Jacob: (astonished). Outfitting arrangements?

Gertrude: O, that is the least. Leave that to me, I shall arrange everything splendidly. I understand that thoroughly, and already today I shall begin the work.

Jacob: (quickly). Be not so hasty, Aunt.

Gertrude: Yes, certainly, hasty. There is much to do and much to get ready. There is the house, the table, the bed linen to provide. There are the pieces of furniture which are still lacking, the necessary utensils for kitchen and cellar, there is a beautiful trousseau to be procured with everything that belongs to it, so that the young housewife may have everything in order right away. (Very well pleased) Yes, Yes, Jacob, you shall appreciate your old aunt. Nothing, nothing shall be forgotten, down to the baby stockings and little caps.

Jacob: (wrings his hands). Dear Me! Baby caps!

William: (Maliciously). And little stockings!

Gertrude: Children, I actually feel myself younger again. God bless your decision, Jacob. Only carry it out immediately, and strike the iron while it is still hot.

Jacob: (wipes his forehead). It's hot enough for me! That is certain..

William: (looks toward the left). If I am not mistaken, Louise is just coming out of the garden.

Gertrude: (glancing toward the garden). Charming, that happens just fine! Now then, right at it, Jacob! Put forth your request.

Jacob: Now, right now, Aunt?

Gertrude: That's understood: and be nice and tender and courteous, so that you don't get the mitten.<sup>25</sup>



Jacob: Would that I could be so fortunate.

Gertrude: But what do you look like, anyway? Your hair and beard must be arranged orderly, and off with the dressing-gown, and put on a handsome coat, or better still, a dress coat.

Jacob: I don't even believe that I own a dress coat.

Gertrude: Why yes, that beautiful black one you wore for your examinations.

William: If the moths haven't eaten it. Come, Jacob; I want to fix you up so that you will look like a prince.

Jacob: Yes, like a sacrificial animal led to the altar. But you will see, Aunt, that she will reject me.

William (leads him off) That would be better yet! Such a handsome man as you rigged out and spruced up in a black swallow-tail coat and white neck tie, will get ten girls instead of one; and just let me see to it that Louise will not reject you. (Leads him into the house).

Gertrude: (runs after them). Go, go! Louise will be here right away. Just hurry and get ready.

#### Fourth Scene

Gertrude, alone, and immediately Louise comes.

Gertrude: (returns) Well, at last I have them thus far, -- that took effort! Now I want to sound out Louise right away. That would be something, if she should cause me difficulty!

Louise: (from the left, reading in a book)

Gertrude: But what do I see there? A book in her hand, and reading. Well, of all things that she, too, should allow herself to become infected with that book business. Louise, what does this mean; what do you have in your hand?

Louise: Oh, Auntie, this is a splendid book! It is the latest work of William's; his travels in the North. How beautifully, how cleverly it is written. One seems to see country and people before you, and one feels to be in their midst. What glorious portrayal of the customs, the characters; what beautiful studies and observations! O, William is an ingenious person!

Gertrude: William is? Leave that stuff; it will turn your head and draw you away from that which is useful.

Louise: What can be more useful than a good book, especially when it is so instructive as William's travelogue?

Gertrude: Oh, what William! Jacob also writes beautiful books, and much larger ones.

Louise: That may be, but they are either Greek or Latin; I don't understand them. But William's writings - -

Gertrude: (angrily). Now leave William's writings be. I have other things in mind now. Tell me, how do you like it here in this house?

Louise: Oh, very well, Aunt. Only it is somewhat lonesome.

Gertrude: (inquiringly). What do you think of the cousins?

Louise: Oh, well, they are very serious. They have spoken very little with me, and Jacob has not even as much as looked at me. I believe he must be very gloomy. On the other hand, William is at

least - -

Gertrude: Yes, yes! But Jacob, let me tell you, is a very good person.

Louise: I believe that, all right, and still one must take courage even to look at him. I always feel that he is displeased with me. William at least looks friendly sometimes.

Gertrude: (angrily). There we have it. Then William looks friendlier? (Steps aside, in agitation) There we have it! That's a nice mess! Now the other pleases her better! Isn't that enough to make one want to die with anger, after all the trouble I have gone to.

Louise: (wonderingly). What is Aunt talking about, anyway?<sup>26</sup>

Gertrude: But she is not to change<sup>27</sup> my plans now. I will open her eyes yet. (To Louise). You just haven't observed Jacob right. He is a very gentle and lovable person. O, he has beautiful blue eyes - - just notice him once. Much more handsome and gentler than William's (She speaks further to Louise).

#### Fifth Scene

Same. William, Jacob (in swallow-tail coat, white cravat.)

William: (pulling Jacob after him) There, now come on. Truthfully, you look admirable.

Jacob: William, I make myself ridiculous.

Gertrude: (notices the two, who remain standing at the right, talking together). There he is, just see how handsome he appears! His tall, stately figure, that noble bearing - -



Jacob: (to William). I believe Aunt is instructing her already.

Gertrude: (continues) Just don't be so bashful. Look frankly into his face, and he will become friendlier and more familiar. (Goes to Jacob) Now I shall leave you alone; William can go with me, too. Then you can present the matter.

Jacob: No, William stays with me; by myself I have no courage. (Looks bashfully at Louise).

Gertrude: Well, as you want it. (Goes to Louise who is seated at the garden table). You see, how friendly he looks at you? When he talks to you, be very kind and lovable toward him, do you understand? (Goes again to Jacob) So now, proceed, Jacob, take heart! Is that the way a suitor should look? Oh, if I were a man, you should see how I would conquer her by storm. You, you coward you! (Goes grumblingly and threateningly past Jacob and William into the house.)

#### Sixth Scene

William and Jacob (at the right). Louise (at the table to the left, reading).

Jacob: (Gets ready, buttons his coat). Well, I guess we're here! (He glances bashfully toward Louise).

William. Yes, and I guess she's there.

Louise: (aside). They certainly have something up their sleeves.<sup>28</sup> (Glances toward them from behind the book).

William: Just go over and speak to her.

Jacob: But she is reading. I certainly can't disturb her now.

William: Why not? You certainly aren't going to wait until she has read that big book through?

Jacob: What shall I say to her anyway?

William: That is very easy. You step up to her, speak to her, and declare your love for her.

Jacob. - - - But I don't love her!

William; That doesn't matter. You at least must pretend that you do.

Jacob: How on earth shall I ever begin that?

William: That is very simple. You say for example: Good morning, dear cousin. How are You? What are you doing? Are you quite well? or something like that.

Jacob: I can't do that. That is much too hard for me!

William: Oh, why not, anyway? Now imagine that you are the lady cousin, and that I am you. Now note carefully, how I would do it. (He goes a few steps back, collects his composure, and approaches Jacob, and in courtly manner, bows gracefully). Good morning, dear little cousin!

Jacob: (bows also). Good morning, cousin!

William: (embarrassed). It - - I - - him - - How did you sleep?

Jacob: All right; thank you.

William: That makes me happy - - It- it is a very beautiful day!

Jacob: Yes.

William: And -- yes -- and I -- hm -- hm --

Jacob: Now you see, you don't make any headway either!

William: (angrily) Well, anyway, you can't expect me to court you!<sup>29</sup> I lose the illusion when I see you with your white cravat and your black coat. It would go much better with her.

Jacob: Then try it with her.

William: Very well, I shall demonstrate for you. Step behind a bush, and be sure to pay good attention so that you can imitate me.

Jacob: (happily). Fine, fine! Dear brother, you certainly are a good soul.

William: Now you finally see how I am sacrificing myself for you? Now pretend that you are going away, but quick! I feel as though I were in the fire.

Jacob: (steps quickly behind a bush beside the pavilion).  
Good, good, I'll gladly go!

(William watches him until he has disappeared.)

Louise: They are leaving without saying anything to me?  
(Happy) Oh no, William is coming back. (She continues reading).

William (returning). Now is my time. But first I must survey this thing. (He comes closer, looks at her, and steps back).

Louise: (surprised). What in the world can he want?

William: She truly looks very lovely! There is something so dreamy, so poetical about her! The seriousness with which she pursues

her reading is very becoming to her!

Jacob: (from behind the bush) Well, William, go ahead and begin.

William: Right away, right away - - just wait a bit; I have to collect myself. Hm, hm! - - it isn't so easy after all as I had thought. Hm, hm. - - But I'll have to speak to her or I'll disgrace myself before Jacob. (Takes heart, and steps forward). Hm, hm- so absorbed, beautiful cousin? Is it permissible to disturb you?

Louise: (looks up cheerfully) Oh, cousin, the pleasure of your conversation is so seldom mine that one could not speak of disturbance. (She arises).

William: May I ask, what so demands your interest?

Louise: (mischievously) An admirable work by a certain Professor William Zorn.

William: (astonished) What, of mine?

Louise: Yes, your travels in the North. Oh, you'll not believe how much pleasure your work has already given me.

William (has taken the book out of her hand). Truly, it is my latest book! (Gives it back to her). But isn't it a pity to strain those beautiful eyes with this.

Jacob: (steps a short distance from behind the bushes and continually imitates in the background William's movements). Beautiful eyes! That's good!

Louise: They could fall upon nothing more noble.

William: (aside) She really has very beautiful eyes. (aloud).

Then do you find a liking and an interest in literature?

Louise: Don't you trust me to have an appreciation for the noblest works?

William: (quickly). No! No! I trust you with everything good and beautiful. In such a beautiful, lovely person must also dwell a beautiful soul.

Jacob: Beautiful soul! That's good, too.

William: (aside). She is really most charming! And what pretty hands she has. (He takes her hand).

Jacob: Aha, he takes her by the hand. (Imitates William's movements). That's very good.

William: How flattering it is for us to see our books in such charming hands. That makes us all the more happy, because we professors seldom have such good fortune. (Kisses her hand).

Jacob: He kisses her hand! (Imitates it). Ha, that suits me!

Louise: Yes, unfortunately we occupy ourselves mainly with only knitting hose, the embroidery frame or, at the most, with some light novel. But believe me, William, not all are like that. There are also some who would gladly busy themselves with the more serious sciences.

William: How, Louise, you, you talk like that?

Louise: Still more; I feel it.

William: Do you not find us scholars vain, boresome?

Louise: How could I? I have far too great a respect for your works for that and only regret that we poor women are not permitted



to follow the flight of our intellect as I should like.

William: (aside) She is actually fascinating. Where have my eyes been, anyway?

Louise: (enthusiastically) How wonderful it must be to comprehend and understand the nature of the countries and people, the character of nature, of the universe as you do; to rise above this earth and to fathom the course of the sun and planets. How small I appear to be when I look up to their height and find nothing, nothing but the longing to pursue them and to comprehend them.

William: What do I hear, Louise, cousin? (aside) How beautiful she looks now, and how enthusiastically she speaks. (Aloud) Louise, if an opportunity were found to satisfy this wish? If there were to be found a man who with joy would satisfy your desire, who would devote himself entirely to you, to lead you to the same plane of knowledge that he himself has attained?

Louise: I should gladly follow him and be a teachable student.

William: (somewhat hesitant) And if it were one of your cousins?

Louise: (looks away) One of my cousins?

William: (presses her hand to his lips). And if -- do I dare say it, Louise -- if it were I? (puts his arm around her).

Jacob: (agreeable) Fine, fine! I'll take note of that? (Imitates).

Louise: (frees herself gently, shyly). Then will you have

patience with such a weak girl and not become angry, if I do not learn as quickly as you think I should?

William: I become angry with you, Louise? What do you think? Put me to the test. I shall be as patient as a lamb. I will review everything ten times only to have the pleasure to behold your beautiful eyes. I just can't understand it that I have not noticed that before.

Louise: (reproachfully). You have been very unconcerned about me.

William: And this little mouth! How wonderful it must be to hear one's own words repeated with such a mouth! Louise, answer me, will you venture it with me? (Embraces her waist).

Jacob: (during these last words has stolen up and tugs at William's coat).

William: (Turns around). What's the matter?

Louise: (startled) Oh! Jacob! (Goes to the table and takes her book).

Jacob: You, William, that's good.

William: (angrily) No, it's not good; get going!

Jacob: I know enough already, just go.

William: What for? I'll not be through for a long time yet. The most important part is yet to come.

Jacob: Is that so? Is there more?

William: Certainly; just hurry and get out, of here, and pay good attention.



Jacob: Well, for all I care! But don't be too long about it.

(He goes back behind the bush again).

William: That would be a pretty mess if he would want to get mixed up in this. He appears to be enjoying the lesson. (alarmed) But, say! It just comes back to me that I am actually speaking for Jacob. But, now it is my turn. Why did he get me into this dangerous situation. She pleases me well, and after I have once put my hand to the plow,<sup>20</sup> I certainly can't turn back.

Louise (During these last words turns to go).

William: (detains her). Where to, little cousin. You are not leaving?

Louise: Jacob must certainly have something important to discuss with you.

William: By no means. But I have somewhat to discuss with you. Where did I leave off, anyway? The confounded person has confused me.

Louise: You have offered yourself to be my teacher.

William: No, Louise, not that alone. I wanted also to tell you that - - that you please me extraordinary - - that I love you dearly.

Louise: (roguishly withdraws her hand) Cousin, that is not a part of the instruction.

William: How, Louise? You withdraw your hand. Will you not answer me?

Louise: But I have told you that I would gladly be your pupil.

William: And if I should want to be more to you - - your teacher - -

your friend -- if you consent to it, your --

Louise: Well cousin, you hesitate; what is it that you want me to consent to?

Jacob: Now comes the last bomb. I know already what he wants to say.

William: Well then Louise, I must say it. If you will consent -- also your husband who will love you dearly, honor you, carry you on his arms!

Louise: (blushing) William, you surprise me -- you want? --

William: Yes, yes, cousin, I do! And if you say yes, you will make me unspeakably happy. (He sinks to his knees and presses her hand to his lips).

Jacob: Aha, that is really the main part! Fine! (Also sinks to his knees).

Louise. Stand up. What will Aunt say about this?

William: (still kneeling) It is her dearest wish.

Louise: What will Jacob say?

William: He -- well he will be heartily glad about it. But what will you -- you, Louise, say? (arises).

Louise: (looking down) Are you really fond of me? 31

William: Yes, certainly, Louise. I would not lie to you and pretend a boundless love before you. But I am heartily fond of you, and the real, sincere, true love will come too, if I dare hope to receive your affection. Speak, Louise, can you give me that?

Louise: ( gives him her hand) Well -- William --

William: Yes, yes, Louise?

Louise: Well then, cousin, yes! I will trust you, and (looks about her, bashfully) between you and me, William, I have been fond of you since I first saw you. But you, you did not even so much as look at me!

William: (happily). Certainly I was a fool, stricken with blindness. But now my eyes are opening, and I see a whole heaven before me. You dear, heavenly girl; now, now give me a kiss to seal our union! (He kisses her).

Jacob: Oh, indeed, that makes it charming!

#### Last Scene

(As before Gertrude has come out of the house during the last words. Jacob steps out of the bushes and comes nearer).

Gertrude: Well, heaven help me! William, what is the meaning of this?

William: (alarmed, and releases Louise) Our Aunt!

Gertrude: (to Jacob) and you stand there so quietly and look on?

Jacob: (knowingly, quietly to her) William is only showing me how I should do it.

Gertrude: Is that so? Why don't you do that yourself? Why haven't you talked to her yet?

Jacob: All right. All right! It is William's fault, he isn't through yet.

William: (Taking Louise's hand). I am, Brother, I am entirely through now. Dearest Aunt, dear Brother, I present to you our dear cousin as my bride.<sup>32</sup>

Gertrude: What is this?

Jacob: Your bride?

William: Yes, my dear, precious bride, who by her consent now, has made me the happiest man in the world.

Gertrude: Well, that's a pretty mess! You want to get married. But I thought that - -

Jacob: Yes, certainly; and I wanted to. It pleased me very well.

William: (Looks at Louise, and laughs) But it pleased me better.

Jacob: But the lot fell to me!

William: (laughing). Yes. On paper. But I here in reality, and with certainty, have been the best prize winner.

Gertrude: Well, and what does Louise say?

William: Oh, she is satisfied. Isn't that so Louise?

Louise: If my dear Aunt has nothing against it?

Gertrude: Well, as far as I am concerned! It's all the same to me which one of you marries; if only there is a marriage.

Jacob: (grumbling). That is right mean of you, William. You were only going to demonstrate for me! Why did I put on my dress coat?

William: Well, in such matters each must act for himself.

Jacob: That's too bad! For the first time in my life I would have had a liking for it. But that is the way it goes when a person lets himself get in with women.

William: (Takes Louise's arm) Not always. One must only begin in the right way.

Gertrude: And not let yourself be scared out right away. Just try it again sometime. It will go better eventually.

Jacob: Deliver me from that. Once, and never again. It is very well this way. I will not allow myself to be mislead again. I shall remain single and with my books. For Father said only:  
One shall marry.

OBSTINACY

Comedy in One Act

by

Roderick Benedix

### Characters

Ausdorf, a rich private gentleman

Katherina, his wife

Emma, their daughter

Alfred, Emma's husband

Henry	)	Alfred's servants
Elizabeth	)	



(A room in Alfred's house with a middle door and side doors. In the center of the stage is a table, partly set, which stands back far enough to allow the entire foreground to be free for the action. At the right of the middle door is another table upon which are glasses, bottles, linens, and everything necessary to set a table. In front of it, to the left is a little sewing table and a sofa; to the right is a small table with a newspaper.)

### First Scene

Henry, Elizabeth

Henry: (is busy setting the table; he completes the table at the opening of the scene, and places the chairs. He hums a tune.)

Elizabeth: (from without) Henry, Henry, open the door!

Henry: (opens the middle door.)

Elizabeth: (steps in with two bowls of cold food in her hands and sets them on the table).

Henry: Come, I will help you! (takes one of the bowls, embraces her as she places the other on the table and kisses her cheek).

Elizabeth: But Henry - - if someone should see! -

Henry: Who would see it?

Elizabeth: The master could come any moment!

Henry: But Elizabeth, a kiss like this in passing, to catch in its flight, that is the most pleasing.<sup>1</sup>

Elizabeth: But if the master -

Henry: Well, and if he would have seen it, - - what of it?

Elizabeth: I would be embarrassed to death.

Henry: But why? He no doubt kisses his wife too - - has been married only three months - -

Elizabeth: Yes, his wife! If you were my husband - -

Henry: (tenderly). How long will it be yet?

Elizabeth: (sighs). Who knows - -

Henry: (embraces her). In any case, longer than you wish it?

Elizabeth: (frees herself). What kind of talk is this! Think about setting the table!

Both: (they finish the table).

#### Second Scene

As before. Alfred (remains standing in the door and hears the following scene).

Elizabeth: The master's father-in-law and mother-in-law are coming to breakfast.

Henry: And they are happy to see how happy the young married people are! Hm, to be sure, I can't present you with a father-in-law - -

Elizabeth: That doesn't matter; I can't either.

Henry: I think that we are enough for each other! (surveys the table). That's good, the table is set.

Elizabeth: Yes.

Henry: What?

Elizabeth: Nothing - - I said "Yes".

Henry: That is nothing; you must say the other, too.

Elizabeth: What?

Henry: That's good, the table is set!

Elizabeth: Why?

Henry: Because you ought to say so.

Elizabeth: Stupid business!

Henry: When one has completed something one should say: "That's good" or "Praise God", or "Thank God, the thing is finished."

Elizabeth: Foolishness!

Henry: That isn't any foolishness, no stupid business. When the dear God had created the earth and saw that everything was good, He also said "Thanks be to God, the earth is finished".<sup>2</sup> And therefore it is a good custom for one always to say when one - -

Elizabeth: Oh, go on with that foolishness!

Henry: (earnestly). Elizabeth, this is no foolishness. You must not be so skeptical. (Gently). Come here and say as I do: The table is set! Let's be thankful!

Elizabeth: No!

Henry: Just to please me.

Elizabeth: I don't want to!

Henry: (becomes warm). You don't want to?

Elizabeth: No!

Henry: If I ask you something, then you say: I will not do it!

Elizabeth: Yes, yes, yes! If I do not want to, then I will not, even if you ask me ten times!

Henry: (warmer). How would I feel? I could ask you ten times

and you would always say no!

Elizabeth: Yes, If you bring up such stupid trash.

Henry: This isn't any stupid trash; but we are not even speaking of that. You are only to say it because I wish it!

Elizabeth: I won't do it!

Henry: (threatening). Elizabeth!

Elizabeth: (in the same tone). Henry!

Henry: Now you must say it.

Elizabeth: I must?

Henry: (definitely) Yes, I request it!

Elizabeth: Are you dreaming? Or did you get up on the wrong side of the bed this morning?

Henry: Don't joke! I am in earnest.<sup>4</sup> You shall say: Let's be thankful, the table is set!

Elizabeth: (pertly). I shall say that?

Henry: Yes!

Elizabeth: (walks behind him) I shall? I must?

Henry: You shall and must!

Elizabeth: Then I won't do it ~~at~~ all!

Henry: (with suppressed anger). Elizabeth, I beg of you!

Elizabeth: I'll not do it!

Henry: For the last time I am asking you!

Elizabeth: I won't do it. I won't do it though you should stand on your head.

Henry: We shall see about that !

Elizabeth: (folds her arms). We'll see about that!

Henry: (close in front of her angrily). Then, you will not fulfill my request, you refuse obstinately?

Elizabeth: Yes!

Henry: They you must! (Takes both her hands at the wrists and presses them).

Elizabeth: Ouch!

Henry: Say it!

Elizabeth: No - - ouch, ouch!

Henry: (Prompting her). Let's be thankful, the table is set!

Elizabeth: No, No! (Frees herself, slaps his hand, and blows her wrists). You hateful person, to hurt me like this - - and I'll not say it anyway! (Henry must not press hard so that Elizabeth does not betray great pain).

Henry: Very well, we are through!<sup>5</sup>

Elizabeth: Then go!

Henry: You give me up so easily?

Elizabeth: If you want to be a fool.

Henry: (pleading in comical anger). But you could say those few words?

Elizabeth: But I will not, I will not, I will not!

Henry: Well then go to - -

(Door bell rings, to the left)

Elizabeth: We'll speak later of this. (Goes to the left).

Henry: (follows her; at the door takes a hold of her dress entreatingly). Elizabeth: Let's be thankful, the table is set!

Elizabeth: (stamps her foot) No! (off).



Henry: Stubbornness, thy name is Woman! Pleading, threatening, force - - all is in vain! I believe I could kill her and still she would not say it!

Alfred: (laughing comes on stage). For the present let her live, Henry, whether she says it or not!

Henry: (embarrassed). Oh Master, you heard - - ?

Alfred: (still laughing and gay) A part of your quarrel - - yes, yes. The girl is obstinate.

Henry: Oh, she is good otherwise - - I don't know what she has in her head today!

Alfred: Yes, yes. Who can always know what those women have in their heads. But go now, provide another glass of Madeira - - my father-in-law likes to drink a glass for breakfast.

Henry: (to himself as he goes off stage). She will have to say it yet!

Alfred: (Looks toward the left). Isn't she through dressing yet? She has already rung the bell. Oh, there she is.

### Third Scene

Alfred: Emma (from the left).

Emma: Good morning, dear husband! 6

Alfred: (embraces her), My dear Emma!

Emma: (very gently and tenderly). How did you sleep?

Alfred: You can ask such a question? Are you not my wife?

Emma: Flatterer! (With mock earnestness). That must stop.

We have been married three months already. You must begin to be the husband and stop playing the lover.

Alfred: And would that please you.

Emma: Oh, Well, the whole world tells me that men change after marriage, and therefore I must also prepare myself for it. The longer you postpone this change, the more you will spoil me and the harder it will be for me to get used to it. (In his arms, looks lovingly in his eyes.)

Alfred: (heartily). Never will I change, dear wife. You shall never see any difference between what I am now and what I will be in the future.

Emma: And I shall never give you the opportunity.

Alfred: I know you are the best wife in the world. You fulfill my wishes before I have expressed them.

Emma: And do you not do the same?

Alfred: Now could I resist your eye when it is directed upon me in such a friendly way and desires a kiss. (Wants to kiss her).

Emma: (slips away from him; playfully). Not so fast my lord. My eyes never ask for kisses, they only grant them.

Alfred: Well, then grant.

Emma: (embraces him). Dear Alfred!

Alfred: My sweet wife!

Emma: (sits at the table to the left and takes up some work). My parents tarry long. I thought they would come earlier.

Alfred: (sits near her and plays with a corner of her work). Do you miss them?



Emma: (observes him significantly). That question was not considerate of you.

Alfred: No, no, it just escaped my lips. (laughs, suddenly remembers). Just now I have - - (laughs).

Emma: What have you now? It must be very funny.

Alfred: I have just over heard a most comical scene.

Emma: Heard? Oh, oh, Sir Husband!

Alfred: (Still laughing). Entirely by chance. As I came out of my room, I heard a lively conversation. I stood still. At the same time Henry and Elizabeth completed the setting of the table, and Henry pleased with the task said: "Let's be thankful, the table is set" and desired Elizabeth that she say it too because one should say that when one has completed a task.

Emma: How silly.

Alfred: Elizabeth refused, Henry insisted upon it, they got into a regular quarrel. He wanted to force her to say it, but she remained stubborn and didn't say it.

Emma: (Taking sides) Well the question still remains as to who was the more stubborn, Henry or Elizabeth!

Alfred: He only asked her to.

Emma: That was a foolish request.

Alfred: But so insignificant that such a stubborn refusal can hardly be justified.

Emma: (warmer). Just as little the stubborn request. I do not see that Elizabeth was wrong.

Alfred: (laughing). Let us not quarrel about it. Such a thing could not happen to us, of course.

Emma: (looks at him doubtfully.)

Alfred: If I should request something like this of you, you would do it.

Emma: (smiling). Hm, hmm.

Alfred: (decidedly). I am convinced you would do it.

Emma: And if I would not do it.

Alfred: If you would not do it? That is unthinkable.<sup>7</sup> I would bet on that!

Emma: Don't bet.

Alfred: Let's try right now.

Emma: (quickly). No, let's not try it!

Alfred: I beg of you dear Emma, say, "Praise be, the table is set."

Emma: Go on, you're childish!

Alfred: (Pleading). Please, please, say it!

Emma: (struggling with herself). What kind of a request is that.

Alfred: Please sweet little wife, say "Praise be, the table is set."

Emma: (Not yet firmly and decidedly). No, I will not say that!

Alfred: Please! Please!

Emma: (decidedly). No! No!

Alfred: (slightly startled). You won't say it?

Emma: (resolutely). NO!

Alfred: (rises slowly). You could refuse me a request?

Emma: But it would be childish to say that!

Alfred: (stands up). Childish or not, it doesn't depend upon that! It is only a question of whether you fulfill my request.

Emma: You do wrong to make such a request!

Alfred: That may be. At the same time you do wrong to refuse me.

Emma: (stands up, and from now on always more determined and more irritated). I do wrong. This is the first time you have said anything like that to me!

Alfred: It is also the first time that you refuse me a request.

Emma: And the first time that you so childishly, so inconsiderately ask me!

Alfred: Childish? inconsiderately? What words are these I must hear from you? Is that the speech of love?

Emma: Can love demand such foolishness of the beloved?

Alfred: Oh, I have not demanded yet. I have only requested.

Emma: (with emphasis). So - - and if you should demand?

Alfred: Then - - (hesitates).

Emma: (stronger). And if you should demand it.

Alfred: (hesitates). Then you certainly would not refuse!

Emma: (decidedly). That is just when I would refuse!

Alfred: How?

Emma: You would demand such a thing of me. You would humiliate me like this? I might have given in to the request, but I'll not yield to the demand!

(the door bell rings).

Alfred: Oh, how passionately, how resolutely you rise up against me! Is this the tone of voice my wife speaks to her husband?

Emma: Are such foolish demands what a husband would ask of his wife?

#### Fourth Scene

Same as before. Elizabeth, then Henry (both through the middle door).

Emma: (calls to Elizabeth just entering). I have left my handkerchief! <sup>8</sup>

Elizabeth: (off stage, to the left).

Alfred: Emma, do not carry to extremes<sup>9</sup> a matter that first began as a joke.

Emma: Am I doing that? You are the one who is changing a jest into earnestness.

Henry: (brings a bottle of wine and sets it on the table at the back).

Elizabeth: (brings Emma the handkerchief and is leaving through the middle door).

Henry: (as she passes him, Henry pantomimes to her the question: Will you say it?)

Elizabeth: (refuses with gesticulated determination and leaves).

Henry: (follows her, threatening). (this entire interlude must move very quickly).

Emma: (is seated after her last speech and works industriously, her back turned towards Alfred).

Alfred: (stands at the right of the table and reaches for the newspaper, turned away from Emma. As soon as Elizabeth and Henry have gone, he looks over the paper toward Emma who does not look at him; he lays the paper down, clears his throat, and walks a few steps, quietly.) Have you thought it over?<sup>10</sup> Do you want to give up your stubbornness?

Emma: (Throws her work down, passionately). How? Stubbornness? You know that I cannot tolerate that word. I am not stubborn, and in this case I certainly am not; but you are the one who so stubbornly insists upon such foolishness!

Alfred: But Emma, understand that I am not concerned <sup>11</sup> about this foolishness. I only desire that you do not refuse my request.

Emma: And I beg of you to stop with this matter.

Alfred: But I was the first one to ask you - - my request has precedence. I would never have considered it possible that you could ever say no! I can not bear the thought!

Emma: Well? Then shall I never say no? Always only: Yes, yes, yes! See, you are like all the men. You don't want to have a loving wife, no equally privileged friend. You expect your wife to be your slave!

Alfred: What exaggeration!

Emma: No, no, that's the way subjugation begins - - with the demands of blind obedience. But I will not allow myself to be made a slave. Never, never. I will defend my rights to the last breath.



Never will I submit myself to threat, never to brutal force.

Alfred: (remarks casually) "And he shall be your master" say the Scriptures.

Emma: (Taking up the words). Do you see that I was right? You want to be the master, I shall be the slave. You want to command, I shall obey. Oh, I acknowledge your authority; when it is proper I shall obey you in all reasonable matters, but never when your commands are unreasonable!

Alfred: (earnestly). Those are no expressions that one addresses to one whom he respects!

Emma: Such things one does also not expect of a wife whom one respects.

Alfred: But a joke - -

Emma: Oh, you have made bitter earnestness of it. (weeping). Within that last fifteen minutes you said to me: I shall never change, and even now you stand in my presence as the cold, unfeeling husband who sees his wife only as and inferior.

Alfred: (struggling with himself). Do not weep. You know that tears irritate me!

Emma: (Sobbing). I cannot help it if you drive me to tears. <sup>12</sup>

Alfred: (ironically, not forceful). For goodness sake, what a monster I have already become! I drive you to tears. Poor, pitiable woman, whose misfortune it is to be chained to such a brute.

Emma: All right, just add ridicule to your cruelty. And if someone should have told me this an hour ago! I arose so joyfully,



and felt so happy, and now - -

Alfred: (ironically). - - there is no more unfortunate woman than you are - - just say it right out.

Emma: (weeps and does not answer).

Alfred: (to himself). That cursed weeping! If our parents should come now, what will they think! (controls himself). Emma - - Emma - - Wife - - dear child - - come, let us make our peace.

Emma: (takes her handkerchief from her eyes and looks at him significantly). Peace?

Alfred: It is foolish that we embitter this beautiful morning ourselves.

Emma: (gently). Do you see into that?

Alfred: No one has less reason to disagree than we have.

Emma: (with gentlest reproach). And still you were so hard against me!

Alfred: See now, I come to you, I offer you my hand. Let's make our peace. (Steps before her and offers his hand).

Emma: (slowly raises her hand, and with a loving look, lets it sink into his). You naughty boy, to torment me so.

Alfred: (presses her to him, pleading). And now you'll say those few words to please me?

Emma: What? Still?

Alfred: You will not?

Emma: (without passion). But Alfred - -

Alfred: I have come toward you, have offered you my hand, now now it is up to you also to give in on your part.

Emma: (struggling with herself). Therefore you insist upon it? You want this quarrel from the beginning?

Alfred: (half pleading). End this in fun -- say those few words and I shall be satisfied.

Emma: (after a short struggle). NO! and once more, No!

Alfred: (with constraint). No?

Emma: (decidedly). No!

Alfred: (continually rising into passionate feeling). Well and good, very well. You see that you could do me a favor with this trifle, only you will not do it. My wish might be foolishness, but it is still my wish -- you do not fulfill it. It may be obstinate on my part to demand that of you, only love should yield to obstinacy. You should give in -- you don't do it. I am not concerned about these stupid words, but to me it would be a proof of your love to have you say them, -- and this proof concerns me a great deal; but you do not give me this proof. I have pleaded with you, I have requested, I have exhausted all kinds of arguments of reason, but you still remain stubborn. And you pretend<sup>13</sup> to love me? You, who can not even once subdue her stubbornness in order to show her husband a favor? Go, go, never tell me again that you love me. (walks passionately back and forth).

Emma: (leans against the table). You accuse me of stubbornness? And with what right? You admit yourself that it is foolish to ask such stupid words, and still you insist upon this foolishness. It would degrade me knowingly to commit such a folly, and still you decidedly demand this degradation. Is that love? You can see that your request

pains me (goes from a determined tone of voice to a more gentle, and at last begins to weep). that your assumptions hurt me -- but that does not move you. You insist on your own idea. Your hardness brings me to tears -- they leave you cold -- my entire nature revolts against your demand, but stubbornly you insist upon your own will. Where, on whose side is the obstinacy now? Where is the lack of love?

#### Fifth Scene

Henry: (announcing). The lady and gentleman are coming!  
(stands beside the table at the back ready to serve).

Alfred: (somewhat restless, quietly to Emma). Hide your tears! What will your parents think of you?

Emma: (dries her eyes). As far as I am concerned they may know what has been going on here. I feel that I am blameless.

Alfred: Consider your duties as housewife -- one must show one's guest a cheerful countenance. (goes to meet the guests).

Emma: (dries her eyes and likewise goes to meet the guests.)

#### Sixth Scene

Same as before. Ausdorf, Katherina, later Elizabeth.

Ausdorf: Good morning, children, good morning! Hey! How are you?

Alfred: (extends his hand). You are heartily welcome! (takes his hat and cane.)

Emma: (embraces her mother and extends her hand to her father).  
Welcome, beloved mother, dearest father.

Katherina: Oh, my child, I haven't seen you for so long.  
Your visits have been rare.<sup>14</sup>

Emma: Dear Mother --

Katherina: (apologetic) Oh, I know child, I know, a young wife has more to do than to think of her old mother.

Ausdorf: (always friendly and cheerful). That is the course of the world -- they shall leave father and mother; as it is stated in the Scriptures -- but Emma thinks of us sometimes anyway, don't you child?

Emma: Always, Father, always!

Alfred: (embarrassed, observes Emma anxiously, who avoids his glance). Shall we not sit down?

Ausdorf: That's all right with me,<sup>15</sup> my son; it is a long distance over here, and I bring tired legs and a big appetite. (sits to the right at the table).

Alfred: (directs his wife to the middle chair, left, while he stands behind the middle chair to the right beside Ausdorf.)

Emma: (sits conspicuously in the chair to the left, at the table).

Katherina: (because of this, gets the left chair behind the table, between Alfred and Emma.)

Scene: Emma, Katherina, Alfred, Ausdorf.

Elizabeth: (after the last words, during which those present were seated, places a bowl upon the table and goes back).

Henry: (catches a hold of her and asks her with pantomime as

before, whether she will say those words).

Elizabeth: (slaps his hand, frees herself, and goes off stage).

(In the mean time, all have been seated).

Ausdorf: (sipping a glass of wine, cheerfully). Ha, Ha, wife, you seated yourself between the young people! That's a smart idea you have, because when they sit together they are unmindful<sup>16</sup> of their guests. Well, here's a toast,<sup>17</sup> young people -- may there be many more days like today!

Alfred: (has poured; takes the glass, but hesitates).

Emma: (sets her glass down and brushes a tear out of the eye).

Ausdorf: What's this? You will not drink a toast with me?

Hey, my son, you look embarrassed and the young wife has a tear in her eye. (laughing). Has there been a family quarrel?

Alfred: (motioning to Henry).

Henry: (goes off stage).

Katherina: How can you ask so indelicate? Let the children settle that?

Alfred: A trifle -- a jest not worth talking about. My dear Emma is too touchy.

Emma: (bursts into tears). That too? Now I am reproached as being touchy, too.

Alfred: You should at least, in the presence of your parents --

Katherina: Calm yourself, Emma. Such things will come up!

Emma: I feel that it is wrong that I can not control myself -- I have tried, have struggled with myself, but I have been too deeply wounded.



Katherina: (takes her part). Well, well, son-in-law.

Ausdorf: Hush, wife, do not interfere with this thing - -  
that concerns only the children.

Alfred: (excited). According to Emma's remark it really looks as if I had done her an unheard of wrong. You may decide for yourself - - I shall tell you the whole story.

Ausdorf: Let's drop it, son, we will not interfere with your family quarrels! (continues to eat and drinks comfortably).

Alfred: No, no, I must justify myself before you.

Ausdorf: That isn't necessary.

Alfred: You might believe - -

Ausdorf: (still eating). We believe nothing!

Katherina: Let him, perhaps that will lead to an understanding. (friendly). Speak, son!

Alfred: This morning I listened to our Henry who requested of Elizabeth that she should say: Praise be, the table is set, and got into a quarrel with her as she did not want to do it. laughingly I told it to my wife, and as a compliment<sup>18</sup> I said to her: you wouldn't be that stubborn, and as a joke asked her if she would say these words. But she refused with such determined obstinacy, with such noticeable stubbornness, that we had a serious exchange of words.

Emma: (still with weeping). There you hear it yourself, stubborn, obstinacy, touchy - - he accuses me of everything. You can bear witness of me that I never was stubborn.

Ausdorf: (good-humoredly doubtful). Well, well, child - -



Katherina: (earnestly). No, husband, you do Emma wrong - - she has never been stubborn. Compose yourself, child, we do not want to push ourselves between you. You will become reconciled again.

Emma: Oh, he still insists that I must say those words.

Katherina: (astonished). How, Son, you still insist upon it?

Alfred: (struggling with himself). Please, let us not discuss it.

Ausdorf: (good-humoredly). Yes, I beg you too, do not spoil my breakfast. You are a little foolish Emma,<sup>19</sup> and see, Son, you must overlook the willfulness on the part of a young wife. She will become accustomed to it like my old wife here. You see, she knows no contradiction, she fulfills all my wishes; and if I should ask of her to say: Praise be the table is set, She would do so immediately!

Katherina: (agitated). But that she would not do!

Ausdorf: How?

Katherina: You would not ask that.

Ausdorf: But if I should ask it?

Katherina: Then I would not do it!

Ausdorf: (between earnestness and jesting). Oh, Wife, you don't mean that!

Katherina: I am fully in earnest!

Ausdorf: You would refuse to fulfill my request?

Katherina: (definitely). Yes!

Alfred: Please, let's talk about something else.

Ausdorf: (aroused). No, this has never happened to me - -  
this must be settled. (pleading). Dear Katherina, say: Praise be,  
the table is set.

Katherina: Leave me alone!

Ausdorf: Please, say it!

Katherina: No!

Ausdorf: (still cheerfully, little by little more serious and  
definite, but does not become violent). I say every day aloud and  
silently for myself with my whole heart, when I see the table ready  
"Praise be, the table is set." You say it!

Katherina: No!

Emma: Dear Mother!

Ausdorf: (always more decided or determined). Katherina!

Katherina: No!

Ausdorf: Little Kate!

Katherina: No! No!

Ausdorf: Katy!

Katherina: I won't do it!

Ausdorf: (stands up). Well - - this is no joking matter! 20

Do you want to be a poor example for your daughter through your  
stubbornness?

Alfred: (stands up). But I beg of you - -

Katherina: (stands up) Here we have the same old story - -<sup>21</sup>  
the men always stick together when it is a question of oppression of  
their wives. The father takes sides against his own daughter!

Ausdorf: I don't take sides at all except my own. What my daughter has to do with her husband does not concern me. I have it to do with you, of you I request it -- you shall say those words!

Katherina: How can you demand such a foolish thing of your wife.

Ausdorf: Foolishness or not, that is not the question.<sup>22</sup> This request is the proof of obedience, nothing more.<sup>23</sup> For the same reason Gessler raised the famous hat, which the Swiss were to salute -- just to prove their obedience.

Katherina: Right, and since the idea of the hat was like -- wise a ridiculous, stupid, degrading request, the Swiss revolted against their tyrants.

Emma: And we submit ourselves just as little as the Swiss submitted.

Katherina: We too, can set ourselves up in revolt against our husbands.

Emma: We are wives, but not inferiors.

Katherina: With the Turks the wife may be an inferior, but we live in a Christian nation.

Emma: It looks as if the men want to establish Turkish customs, for their conduct is very Turkish.

Katherina: (more excited and faster). But thank heaven we are no slaves, and know how to preserve our rights!

Emma: Blind obedience is slavery!

Katherina: We investigate first whether the requests are reasonable before we obey.

Emma: And such stupid demands we will never, never, never, fulfill.

Katherina: Never, never, never!

Both Women: (Turn left, turn their back and speak privately together).

Ausdorf, Alfred: (Both stand to the right, try to talk, but since they cannot find words, they are silent, somewhat puzzled).

Ausdorf: (quietly to Alfred). Now we are in for it <sup>24</sup> -- we have set the whole feminine world upon our necks.

Alfred: (quietly). What shall we do?

Ausdorf: (quietly). Dear Son, do as you like; this thing is spoiling my breakfast, and if I have not had breakfast with the proper peace of mind, I do not enjoy my dinner.

Alfred: Certainly we cannot give in?

Ausdorf: My dear fellow, this is a quarrel by which nobody wins anything. I have allowed myself to be carried away with it, have become somewhat angry, but now my composure returns. The women are not so far wrong -- after all, it is as obstinate to stubbornly demand a thing as it is stubborn to refuse. (continues to speak quietly).

Emma: (quietly). If I had dreamed that this thing could go so far, I would have taken it as a joke and done his will. But now I can't do it any more.

Katherina: By all means no! You would forever be the victim of his tyranny.

Emma: He shall see that I have a strong will.

Katherina: That's right. Not one step will we yield. My husband will be surprised; he can beg a long time now before I will make up <sup>25</sup> with him.

Emma: You support me in this, mother?

Katherina: Depend upon that. (they speak further, glancing at the men).

Ausdorf: The wisest gives in.

Alfred: I would like to, but my pride - -

Ausdorf: Bah, that's what one says. It hurts to yield, and one likes to call it "feeling of honor." In a joking way you make this thing right again!

Alfred: Yes, a joke - - I will make an end to this thing. (off stage, at right).

Ausdorf: (laughing aloud). Listen children, you are too strong for me in your alliance! I must first get more strength from this breakfast in order to carry on the fight. (sits down, very honestly). Praise be, the table is set, one has only to help one's self. (eats).

Emma: Dear Mother, do we not also want to?

Katherina: Yes, yes, let us not miss out on our breakfast because of this foolishness.

Alfred: (returns with two shawls in his hands, heartily). Dear little wife, we want to make an end of this war. I offer my hand in peace. I admit that I was the main cause of our quarrel: As an atonement for my guilt I give you for a present one of these two shawls. (unfolds both and holds one in front of each of her hands).



Emma: (somewhat ashamed). Alfred, I don't know - -

Alfred: Choose!

Emma: At this moment - -

Alfred: Choose, choose child!

Emma: (points involuntarily at one of the shawls, then immediately draws back her hand).

Alfred: The one at the right?

Emma: (nods).

Alfred: (lays the other on the table, places the shawl about her). There, it's becoming to you. (steps back a few steps). Now I have come to you three fourth's of the way - - ?

Emma: (struggles a moment with herself, then rushes to him). Praise be, - (in his ear) the table is set! (Ashamed hides her face on his breast).

Henry: (steps in, brings a dish, sets it on the table at the back, and remains standing with the napkin over his arm, ready to serve).

Ausdorf: Bravo, children! You did that very well!

Alfred: (embraces Emma). Our peace is sealed!

Emma: Forever!

Alfred: Never shall anything like this happen again!

Emma: Never!

Ausdorf: That's right, a toast on that!

Elizabeth: (comes in, brings a basket of fruit, sets it on the table at the back, and remains standing beside the table at the back. She sullenly turns her back to Henry, who does the same).



Alfred: (leads Emma to the table and fills the glasses).

Katherina: (has already gone around the table and looked at the other shawl. Now she taps Ausdorf on the shoulder) Husband!

Ausdorf: Hm?

Katherina: Look here.

Ausdorf: What?

Katherina: Here is another shawl.

Ausdorf: Is that so?

Katherina: Do you not want to reconcile me also?

Ausdorf: With that shawl? That's too expensive for me!

Katherina: But think - -

Ausdorf: I hope you do it cheaper, wife. Such a young husband can not endure the discontent of his wife and makes a sacrifice in order to reconcile her, but when he is as old as I am, he'll not do it any more!

Katherina: For shame, how abominable!

Emma: Alfred, I will hope not - -

Alfred: (turns aside, laughing, to Henry) Well, Henry, are you at peace with Elizabeth?

Henry: Oh, she still doesn't want to.

Alfred: Oh, Elizabeth, how obstinate!

Elizabeth. (embarrassed). But Sir - -

Emma: (laughing). You must give in, Elizabeth - - you must say those words.

Elizabeth: You know - -

Ausdorf: Yes, Elizabeth, you started this whole confusion.

Katherina: (passionately). Yes, yes, because of that you have disturbed this whole morning for us. For punishment you have to say it before everybody. Now, out with it. (says it for her, slowly, word for word). Praise be, the table is set!

All: (burst forth in loud laughter).

Katherina: (wondering). Well?

Ausdorf: (laughing). Now you have said it anyway, old lady.

Katherina: (slaps her mouth). Well, then it's at an end! (offers Ausdorf her hand, laughing).

Alfred: Well, Elizabeth, you are the only one left.

Elizabeth: (Struggles with herself, embarrassed). I can't.

Emma: I will see to it that within three weeks you will have your wedding!

Elizabeth: (happily). Wedding? Oh, Praise be!

All: Well?

Elizabeth: (who does not realize that she has said half of the words). Well?

All: Go on! Go on!

Elizabeth: How?

Henry: (Pleading). Say the rest of it!

Elizabeth: (realizing). Oh, that! (looks at each one before her).

All: (urging). Go ahead! Go ahead!

Elizabeth: (passionately). The table is set! (Covers her face with her apron, and runs off stage).

Henry: (after her).

All: Bravo, bravo!

(The curtain falls quickly).

## ONE SHALL MARRY

(The figures here correspond to the respective figures of the text).

1. Zorn is a synonym of Grimm (both if literally translated denote anger or exasperation.) Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm were two brothers who were famous philologists and archaeologists. They also collected and published the tales known as Grimm's Marchen, or Fairy Tales. The names and the calling of the brothers in the play were thus plainly suggested by the Brothers Grimm, who at the time of its first production (1850), were living in Berlin. They were then elderly men, having been born in 1785 and 1786 respectively. As in the play, only the younger brother, Wilhelm, married. The incidents, however, are fictitious, as are the details of characterization. The play is merely a bit of pleasantry at the expense of two great scholars who were widely honored and beloved, and the picture is an example of the author's appreciation of their personality, for their devotion to each other was as remarkable as their love for learning. Except for two short periods in their student years, Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm were never separated, always living under the same roof and working in the same or adjoining rooms. They even owned their library and other property in common. After Wilhelm's marriage Jakob and another brother, an artist, shared his home.

The names and characters of the two women in the play are invented, the story being, as noted above, without foundation in fact.

Wilhelm Grimm married (1826) Henriette Dorothea Wild, whom he had known intimately since childhood.

Jakob and Wilhelm did receive their earliest instruction from a paternal aunt, but they were brought up at home. Their father died in 1796; their mother survived him many years. [Hervey, Einer muss heiraten, pp. 61-62.]

2. Parchment is used here rather than the word book to correspond better with the original "Kalbfell", which means sheep-skin, or calf-skin, denoting scholarly works.

3. Finns and the Letts: the Finns belong to the Ural-Altaic, or Turanian, not to the Indo-European, race. Finland had been a grand-duchy of Russia since 1809. It lies northwest of Russia proper, bordering on Sweden and Norway and the Gulf of Bothnia. The Letts belong to the Balto-Slavonic branch of the Indo-European race and inhabit part of the Baltic Provinces of Russia. [Hervey, Einer muss heiraten, p. 13.]

4. I should like to see myself, for "Sollte mir auch noch fehlen," which is an idiom which would not convey the intended meaning if directly translated.

5. Of all things is here substituted for "Sapperlot", which in the nearest English expression would be an oath.

6. Parchment-bound volumes: books would be an easier word to use but it would not carry the original meaning.

7. Than it really is, instead of the literal translation, than is actually the case.

8. Aunt, spoken with surprise and strong feeling is used here

for the ejaculation, "Gerechter Himmel." The Germans used the words in colloquial phrases which do not have the same suggestion of irreverence that would be given by a literal English rendering.

9. That brought results, literally, Gertrude's words "Das hat getroffen" would be That hit (the spot).

10. I will have nothing to do with you, used here for "sag ich mich los", meaning declare myself free.

11. Cowards is considered a more appropriate translation than pussy-foot, as it must be used in the plural.

12. Life and death matter, the literal meaning is to imperil head and neck.

13. One, for "partei" which means one, or person rather than a group, as is the meaning of party in the English.

14. Crabs, for "Sauertöpfe", literally vinegar or pickling jars, hence applied to peevish or ill-natured persons.

15. Hesitation, for "Federlesen", literally picking over of feathers, hence of doing something with fuss or hesitation.

16. Be so kind, for "tue mir die liebe", literally do this for your love of me, or do me the favor.

17. That's my idea, too, literally I find it also (to be so).

18. An oath has been omitted here, which in the German is an expression of resignation or reluctant acquiescence, but superfluous here.

19. There are none to be found, for the literal there are none at hand.

20. Anyone could wish that, for "Da könnte jeder kommen", which would not give the intended meaning in literal translation.



21. Urn, the Greeks and Romans drew lots from an urn, or vase.

22. Death, Jakob actually says Oh, I am of the dead.

23. I am footloose and free, unattached and single, a close translation as possible to the German alliterated idiom: "Ich bin frank und frei, los und ledig."

24. You are talking sensibly, literally a sensible word.

25. So that you don't get the mitten, the literal translation would be so that you don't get a basket. The phrase had its origin in mediaeval gallantry. From early times baskets were used to draw up provisions and other supplies on the outside of walls and towers. In emergency such a basket might be a convenient means of secret entrance or departure for persons. (Thus, for instance, St. Paul escaped from Damascus, 2 Corinthians, 10:33). The 13th century gallant sometimes reached his lady love by such means. If his suit was unwelcome, a damaged basket might be lowered, through which the unlucky visitor would fall before reaching the upper window. Hence the phrase fall through the basket, formerly used in speaking of an unsuccessful suit. Later a basket without a bottom was lowered, as an equally significant but less painful hint, whence the phrase, got the basket (without a bottom). [Hervey: Biner muss heiraten, pp. 70-71].

26. What is Aunt talking about anyway, literally, what does Aunt have.

27. Not to change my plans, literally not to draw a line through my reckoning.

28. Something up their sleeves, literally, they are taken up

with something, but corresponds in German usage to our English idiom as used in the translation.

29. To court for you, the German "Hof" means court or courtyard. A suitor would hence cross the court in suit of his lady.

30. After I have once put my hand to the plow literally, after I once get into the train.

31. Are you .... fond of me is the nearest English translation for "Sind Sie mir .. gut?"

32. Bride, bride and bridegroom are applied to engaged, not newly married persons. They are equivalent to betrothed, or to the French fiancé and fiancée, respectively.

## OBSTINACY

1. That is the most pleasing, is used for Henry's words which literally mean that tastes the best.

2. "Thanks be to God, the work is finished" is Henry's own perversion of King James translation, Genesis 1:31 to 2:1,2,3-  
 "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

3. The literal meaning of Henry's words is "Thanks be to God", which if used frequently in the German does not give quite the same suggestion of irreverence that it does in the English. The phrase will therefore be translated as "Praise be".

4. I am in earnest, this is the nearest translation to the German, which if literally used would be this is my earnestness.

5. We are through, the idiomatic expression". . . mit uns ist es aus" can not be directly translated.

6. Dear husband, for "Mannchen", which is literally little man or an endearing term for husband.

7. That is unthinkable, for the idiom, if translated, That case is unthinkable.

8. I have left my handkerchief, for which the German says  
\_\_\_\_\_ left my handkerchief lying.
9. Do not carry to extremes, is the nearest English rendering for the German carry to the peak, or point.
10. Have you thought it over, is used for "Hast du dir überlegt" which, if directly translated, would lose its pertinent meaning.
11. I am not concerned, is the nearest English expression for the German idiom "ist es mir ja gar nicht zu tun".
12. The English drive me to tears is used for ". . . sie mir gewaltsam auspresst". The antecedent of "sie" is tears.
13. You pretend, for "du willst", literally would mean you want to.
14. The intended meaning corresponds to our English you make yourself scarce, which is of doubtful good taste in the mouth of one of Katherina's social standing.
15. That's all right with me is an English idiom which corresponds to the German "Ich bins zufrieden."
16. "Ungeniessbar" literally means distasteful or unbearable; unmindful has been used to convey the intended meaning.
17. Toast, the German says to tip the glasses.
18. As a compliment is used instead of the literal flattering.
19. You are a little fool is much more mild in the German, hence you are a little foolish, Emma, is used rather than the literal translation.

20. That is no joking matter is the English idiom for "dass ist mir ausser dem spass" which literally would be: That is beyond, or outside, a joke

21. The same old story, for literally, an old experience.

22. That is not the question, is the English idiom used here for we are not speaking of that, which also is not the exact literal translation either.

23. From the history of the Persians we have the story of King Ahasuerus, who, after being defied by his queen, Vashti, consulted his wise men for a proper method of handling the affair lest all the wives in the kingdom should henceforth take courage and defy their husbands. The men together with the king, agreed that Vashti be removed from the court as queen, and another chosen in her place. Esther 1:2.

24. The literal meaning of "Bescherung" is giving, or distribution of presents; ironically it means now we are in for it.

25. Make up, idiom used for "gut werde", meaning to become friends again.



## LIFE OF AUTHORS

Alexander Victor Wilhelmi (1817-1877) is chiefly remembered as the author of Einer muss heiraten. He was born and educated in Vienna, where he did not quite complete his Gymnasium course. He was then apprenticed to a bookseller until he left to enter the stage in 1847. For several years he played at the Hamburg Stadttheater. In 1849 he went to Dresden where the rest of his career was spent. Failing health sent him to Tyrol, where he died in 1877. As an actor, chiefly of minor parts, Wilhelmi was a favorite with the theater-going public. He wrote a number of good one-act comedies. His Lustspiele were published in four volumes in Dresden, 1854-1860.<sup>1</sup>

Roderich Julius Benedix (1811-1873) was born in Leipsig, and had a wandering career with the celebrated Bethman troupe-by turns actor, opera singer, dramatic author, theatrical manager, and editor of a literary journal.<sup>2</sup> His first play, Das Demooste Haupt, was produced in 1841 and achieved such great success that he left the stage and henceforth devoted himself chiefly to literary work. Besides his numerous plays he wrote "Bilder aus dem Schauspielerleben" and manuals of elocution and correspondence. In

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1. W. A. Hervey, Wilhelmi's Einer muss heiraten (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1933), p. iv.

2. The New International Encyclopedia, Second Edition, Vol. III, (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1926).



Cologne he lectured on literature at a musical institute. Shortly before his death, Benedix published his Shakespearomanie, in which he challenged the laudation of the poet, but the work attracted little notice. His last years were spent in Leipzig. In 1871, the journal, Gastenlaube ran an account of his autobiography. His dramatic works, numbering more than ninety, were published in twenty-seven volumes, Leipzig, 1846-1874.<sup>3</sup>

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3. Hervey, Op. Cit. p.v.

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